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THE GULL
MONTHLY BULLETIN

AUDUBON ASSOCIATION OF THE PACIFIC

VOLUME 11 SAN FRANCISCO, MAY, 1929 NUMBER 5

MAY MEETING: The next regular meeting of the Audubon Association of the Pacific will be held on Thursday evening, the 9th of May, at 8 o'clock, in the Board Room of the State Board of Harbor Commissioners, Room 19, Second Floor, Ferry Building.

The speaker of the evening will be Mrs. Amelia S. Allen. Her subject will be "Birding in the Santa Cruz Mountains", illustrated with colored slides.

Directors' Meeting after regular meeting.

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MAY FIELD TRIP will be taken on Sunday, May 26th, to Livermore. Mr. C. H. McCoy has very kindly invited the Audubon Association of the Pacific to visit his ranch, which is a short distance out of Livermore. Many interesting species of birds nest here. Another interesting animal, not a bird, makes his home here, the horned toad.

More automobiles are badly needed. A sufficient number to carry the members desiring to go has not been offered up to this time. Several members are forming their own parties; this is desirable, provided preference is given to members. The names of all members of a party should be sent to the leader. Non-members of a member's family are cordially invited.

Detailed instructions will be mailed each member as soon as possible after receiving his or her name.

It is hoped that every member interested will cooperate to make the trip a success, both in organization and execution. Visitors will be welcome but must furnish their own transportation.

As a matter of courtesy and fairness to all, no party is expected to go beyond Livermore until final instructions are had from the leader.

Round trip from Oakland about ninety miles. Bring luncheon and filled canteens.

Address all communications to C. A. Bryant, Room 1011, 65 Market St., San Francisco, Calif.

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JUNE FIELD TRIP will be taken on June the 16th to Alpine Lake over a new and easy route away from automobile roads. Distance about eight miles. Purchase round trip tickets to Ross, 60c. Bring luncheon and canteens.

NOTE: It is desired to arrange trips to new places. Members having suggestions to offer will please write to C. A. BRYANT, Room 1011, 65 Market St., San Francisco, Calif.

Also suitable material for publication in THE GULL is requested from the members. Many of us certainly have interesting trips and observations that ought to be shared, at least in written form, with others. If each member will contribute a short article and get a new member, THE GULL will be happy and our organization will be prosperous.

PROCEEDINGS OF THE APRIL MEETING: The regular 14th monthly meeting of the Association was held on the 11th of April, 1929, in the Board Room of the State Board of Harbor Commissioners, Ferry Building, President Harwell presiding.

The President opened the meeting by making reports on personal field observations, and was followed by others as here recorded:

President Harwell: A Short-eared Owl observed for nearly an hour during broad daylight, flying about grain fields and ditches, diving full speed into as many as fifteen different holes (presumably for prey) with remarkable swiftness and accuracy.

Mr. Lockerbie: Two White-tailed Kites and Sparrow Hawks on Angel Island.

Mr. C. A. Bryant: Three Anthony Green Herons at Greenbrae on April 16 and Western Kingbirds along Tennessee Cove Road on April 7.

Mrs. Laura Stephens: Myrtle Warbler at Presidio, Russet-backed Thrush singing (several days previous—unusually early for his migration).

Mr. Carl Smith: 24th of March, American and Red-breasted Mergansers from Golden Gate Ferry off Berkeley, 27th March, two Bald Eagles above foothills of Mt. Diablo near Clayton, Say Phoebe on Crow Canyon road out of Oakland and one in Mt. Diablo region, 7th of April at Dumbarton Bridge, a single Northern Phalarope and on same day, in Niles Canyon, a number of Rough-winged Swallows and White-throated Swifts.

The Corresponding Secretary reported having heard authoritatively that apparently there was no intention on the part of the State Legislature to take up the selection of a bird to be designated as a State Emblem and accordingly the matter was dropped. Progress in the State Bird Campaign was reported by President Harwell to the effect that the Native Daughters are reacting enthusiastically and that the Boy Scouts in Oakland were facilitating the taking and collecting of the votes.

Mrs. Junea Kelly was the speaker of the evening on the subject. "Shore Birds". The lecturer opened with an apology for specialized interest in Shore Birds, but after her attractive presentation of her subject, her audience appreciated the merits that led to her choice. Beginning with instructions to shore bird observers for the use of the tide tables and advice to be at the beaches about one hour after high tide, she briefly sketched the birds' life histories and habits, drawing comparisons between those of different species where a similarity exists. She gave an instructive description of the idiosyncratic probing with the bills of different birds, how the different lengths of the bills, reaching to different depths classified the supply of food, distributing it among the different species, explaining additionally this same result in the foraging by some in mud, others in sand above the tide and to the very edge of receding breakers and among the rocks on open shores and in indentations. Her observations included explanations of the gregarious, communal and segregated habits of the different species. With the aid of specimens she gave minute descriptions of various birds, in which special emphasis was made of the field identification marks, with careful comparisons between similar species. In conclusion she explained how permission to kill snipe opened the way to the abusive killing of many otherwise protected species.

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DIRECTORS' MEETING: After the general meeting the Directors held a short session in which they elected the following to membership in the Association: Mr. A. Gamboni and Mrs. C. W. Lockerbie, San Francisco; Mr. Adolph A. Oliver, Mt. Eden; Mr. William R. Penny, Berkeley; Miss E. Chilton, Atlas, Napa Co.

DAWSON'S BIRDS OF CALIFORNIA

A favorable opportunity to procure "Dawson's Birds of California" at a material reduction in price and on convenient terms is now offered. Students' Edition $30-$50; Booklovers' $75; Santa Barbara $200; De Luxe $350. Only a few copies left. Address Wheeler Publishing Co., 256 Sutter St., San Francisco, Calif. Please mention THE GULL.

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UNUSUAL WINTER VISITANTS IN THE SAN FRANCISCO BAY REGION

One does not usually associate birds, except English Sparrows and Domestic Pigeons, with a city as large as San Francisco. The varied associations that are found in San Francisco's city limits attract many species of birds which are more or less common. But the winter just passed in spite of a longer and colder spell than usual has been, one might say, one long round of pleasure—ornithologically—and many of us have added new birds to our life lists.

In November Surf Birds were reported at Land's End, with them were Ruddy Turnstones and Black Turnstones. All three species were present till the end of March. Along the Marina fifty or more Short-billed Gulls could be observed in one flock at any time one cared to visit the place. However, when the Christmas census was taken on December 23rd not a single Short-billed Gull was present. But to compensate for this Florida Gallinules were found on Lake Merced on the same date and were observed often up to April 11th. Myrtle Warblers also were present in fair numbers around the south end of the lake and were observed up to April 14th.

On San Francisco Bay, American Scoters were present along the Key Route Pier and along the San Francisco Drawbridge. A lone individual in front of the Oakland Ferry slip on April 19th was unable to fly away from the ferry boats' course, evidently had been injured or the feathers were oil-soaked. Farther north on Tomales Bay during February more American Scoters were present as were countless thousands of Black Sea Brant.

On Lake Merritt in Oakland seven Horned Grebes were recorded by the Audubon Association on the field trip to that locality.

On January 20th a lone Road-runner was observed near the parking place on the Alameda County end of the Dumbarton Bridge, a most unusual association for road-runners.

A Mocking Bird in Berkeley and another in Burlingame rather made one feel that perhaps southern California may not long enjoy its monopoly on this attractive bird.

The climax came on March 17th on the Audubon trip to Point Bonita when four Glaucous Gulls were discovered along the Sausalito shore.

Concerning birds more or less common, Turkey Vultures have an all year 'round roost not far off a much traveled road above Mill Valley. Twenty-five or thirty vultures may often be seen apparently resting or asleep. In other localities Turkey Vultures are found all winter. It would seem now that this species should be classed as a permanent resident rather than as a summer visitant.

A pair of White-tailed Kites evidently live near Greenbrae and were more recently observed on Angel Island.

Robins and Varied Thrushes have been unusually abundant.

Unusual records like some of the above together with our usual records make the San Francisco Bay Region a very interesting birding country in which unusual species are apt to give us a thrill at any time.

APRIL FIELD TRIP was taken to Lake Merced on Sunday, the 14th under the efficient leadership of Mrs. Bracelin and Mr. Lockerbie. The usual route was reversed. The party formed at the head of the ravine below Daly City, dividing into two groups and working both banks of the ravine, uniting again at the mouth of the ravine and proceeding to a secluded spot on the shore of the South Lake to watch for the Florida Gallinules that have been wintering here and were incorrectly reported in the April GULL as Purple Gallinules. During our watchful waiting luncheon was eaten. The Gallinules were missing even though they had been observed only three days before our visit. We hope they were only temporarily absent. After luncheon the party again divided working both shores of both lakes and ending at Sloat Boulevard.

The day was ideal. Both species and individuals were out in numbers. Several species of winter visitants seemed to have lingered a little longer to welcome the spring arrivals. Pileolated Warblers were singing everywhere. Affairs in Mexico must have hastened the departure of the Russet-backed Thrush. His usual arrival is about two weeks later. The Eared and Pied-billed Grebes were smart in new spring plumage. An Anthony Green Heron gave the party a thrill. Rufous Hummingbirds were present. Purple Martins caused some speculation but proved their identity upon close approach and several of us added a new bird to our life list. The association was not typical for Martins. A Cooper Hawk was discovered feeding on a coot. Myrtle Warblers wintering around the South End of the South Lake were still present.

Bush-tits, Marsh Wrens and Song Sparrows had eggs for our inspection in their respective nests. Male Mallards were loafing in the edges of the tules as if guarding their nesting sites.

Birds observed were:—Western, American eared and pied-billed grebes; Farallon double-crested cormorant; California great blue, Anthony green and black-crowned night herons; American bittern; common mallard, lesser scaup and ruddy ducks; northern turkey vulture, Cooper and western red-tailed hawks; coast California quail; American coot; glaucous-winged, northern western and California gulls; western mourning dove; Anna, rufous and Allen hummingbirds; Monterey red-shafted flicker; yellow-bellied western flycatcher; California horned lark; northern violet-green, American bank, barn and northern cliff swallows; western purple martin; Santa Cruz chestnut-backed chickadee; Pacific Coast bush-tit, intermediate wren-tit; Vigor's Bewick and tule marsh wrens; western robin, dwarf hermit and Pacific russet-backed thrushes; western ruby-crowned kinglet, American pipit, Alaska myrtle and Pacific Audubon warblers, San Francisco yellow-throat, golden pileolated warbler; western meadowlark, San Francisco red-winged and California Brewer blackbirds; California purple finch, California linnet, northern pine siskin, willow American and green-backed Arkansas goldfinches, San Francisco spotted towhee, Fox sparrow, Point Pinos Oregon junco, golden, Nuttall white-crowned and Santa Cruz song sparrows. Fifty-nine species.

Members in attendance were:—Mrs. Bracelin, Fowler, Lockerbie; Misses Cockefair, Gunn, Petit. Dr. Card, Messrs. Bremer, Bryant, Jencks, Lockerbie, Myer. Guests: Mrs. Jencks, Ryan, Van Horn; Misses Frank, Beryl and Olive Kautz, Osgood; Messrs. Bolander, Hawkins, Jacobs. Twelve members, twenty-four guests.

C. A. BRYANT.

AUDUBON ASSOCIATION OF THE PACIFIC

FOR THE STUDY AND THE PROTECTION OF BIRDS

President.....Bert Harwell..... 2626 Haste St., Berkeley
Recording Secretary.....Mrs. Bessie W. Kibbe.....Room 510, Russ Bldg., San Francisco
Corresponding Secretary.....C. B. Lastreto..... 260 California St., San Francisco
Treasurer.....Mrs. A. B. Stephens.....1695 Filbert St., San Francisco

Meets second Thursday of each month at 8:00 p.m., in the Board Room of the State Board of Harbor Commissioners, Ferry Building, Second Floor, Room 19.

Address Bulletin correspondence to the Corresponding Secretary.

Subscription to Bulletin alone, 35c per year. Membership dues, payable January 1, $3.00 per year.